1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

364 quickly cleared away by insects. As a matter of fact, decaying organic matter about a settlement is not as much of a problem as might be expected, since any such rubbage is quickly disposed of by the swarms of ants which appear from nowhere as if for this very purpose.

514 Each household has its own latrine in the bush near the house. A tree is cut down, on which one squats. Personal cleaning is done with a stick. Men urinate in a standing position, women squatting. The functions of elimination are performed in strict privacy except at sprees when people are drunk.

For a general picture of a Carib village and the relative economic status of its inhabitants as shown by possessions kept in their houses, the reader is referred to our discussion of the village of Sawari.

CONTAINERS FOR LIQUIDS

415 In this chapter we shall devote ourself to a brief survey of the several types of vessels used by the Caribs which are capable of holding liquids. Basketry is described elsewhere.

317 **Pottery.**[1] Clay for the making of pottery is obtained in a variety of locations. The best clay is found, however, in the beds of creeks, near their upper reaches, where the force of the water has not been sufficient to overlay the material with deposits of stone and rubble.

●323 [462] The making of pottery is woman's work, and the women seek the supplies of clay when it is needed. No special time of year or month is necessarily reserved for this purpose, although the dry season is most auspicious because at that time it is more convenient to go into the bush in search of supplies, and also the drying of the clay and baking of the pots can be more dextrously handled. Furthermore, during high water the beds of clay are frequently submerged. The clay is dug moist and brought back to the house in walishas. It is usually deposited on the rack or loft and allowed to dry, a process which may require a couple of weeks.

[412] When it is dry the clay is pounded into a powder with a wooden club. Apparently, natural ingredients are relied upon for temper-

[1] tumai'ini, pottery making; arinyo, pottery clay.

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

323 ing, inasmuch as no tempering material is added to the pulverized clay. On the other hand, a woman seeking a new source of supply may have to experiment with clays from several different spots before she finds one which does not crack in firing. Consequently, once a suitable clay has been found, the deposit from which it is obtained is worked repeatedly as long as the family lives within a convenient distance of it. Sometimes such a deposit is located as far as a day's distance from the settlement by trail or canoe. When the clay has been pulverized it is again mixed with water and kneaded with the hands.

A flat piece of wood serves as the tournette on which the pot is built. A biscuit of clay is made to start the base; if the base of the vessel is to be flat, this is worked into a discoid shape; if the pot is to have a pointed bottom, the clay biscuit serves as the base without being flattened into a disc. The base of a pointed-bottomed vessel is usually retouched after the vessel is completed, in order to remove the flat surface impressed by the contact of the tournette.

The body of the pot is built up with concentric, not spiral, rolls of clay. There is little that is unusual in the way these strips are applied. At the start, a low rim is made around the edge of the base of clay and is corrugated by pinching with the fingers. A ring of clay is then fitted at a bevel to this rim, overlapping it on the inside. The surfaces are smoothed inside and outside with the fingers and a small piece of calabash shell. This whole process is repeated as the walls of the pot rise. In the original smoothing, the lines of juncture are not completely eliminated, so that the pot, when its walls are complete, is again carefully smoothed with the convex side of a piece of calabash shell. In all of these processes the woman keeps her hands and the clay properly moist by frequently dipping her fingers into a small bowl of water which rests on the ground beside her.

When the form of the pot has been completed it is put aside in a corner of the house, where it is protected from rain, children, and pet animals. For several days it is allowed to dry. Then it is [824] burned upside down over a fire of wepipyo bark. Actually the pot is placed bottom up with its weight resting on the rim, and the fire of burning bark is piled around and over it. It is burned until the fuel, the quantity of which is regulated by the experience of the potter, is finished. Sometimes the pot cracks in firing, "because it

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33)1936 SR9 Carib SR9

323 has not been well dried." The proper amount of fuel must be judged at the start of the firing process. Further fuel cannot be added during the firing, as this also is said to cause the pot to crack, presumably because it interferes with the gradual rise and fall of temperature which is necessary to prevent sudden expansion and contraction.

[824] After the pot is cold, aporokune juice (unidentified) is applied inside and out. The juice, or gum, is applied raw with the hand. Then the pot is again mildly heated, and the gum is melted and can be observed running over it and seeping into the pores. It is said that if the gum is not applied, the pot soaks water and breaks. The aporokune gum gives a varnished or glazed appearance to a new pot. With use, however, the sheen disappears. For glazing, the juice of the inside bark of the tree is used, but for painting decorative designs, the juice of the outer bark is used.

323 531 Crude unformalized designs may be painted on the pot over the glaze. Whether or not a pot is painted depends upon the pride which the potter takes in her work. For this purpose, as already stated, the juice of the outside bark of the aporokune is used. It is made thick, and colored by mixing with lamp black. No other pigment is used. Different shades of brown may be produced in this manner. Clay of white, red, or gray color occurs in different vicinities throughout the area. The variety of clay color, combined with the painted designs, provides a limited diversity of decoration.

Occasionally a band of criss-cross or herring-bone decorative incisions is made around the pot a few inches from the lip. I saw no specimens in which this type of decoration took any other form. The Caribs use no other methods of decoration on their pottery than those already mentioned.

[286] Sometimes the pot is enclosed in a net of nibi plaiting, which fits closely to the surface of the vessel, and provides attachments for hanging the pot.

323 415 Plate 19, *a*, shows the various types of pots made by the Barama Caribs. These patterns may vary in size but remain essentially the same in outline. The tumai'ene (No. 1)[1] is the "buck pot," in which meat and that savory mess called pepper pot are cooked over the fire. The tuku'arimi (No. 2) is a sort of flask, always

[1] Read from left to right in Plate 19, *a*.

1: Gillin E-5 (1932-33) 1936 SR9 Carib SR9

rather small, in which cassarip is kept. The pyotomene (No. 3) is used as a mixing bowl. The karupu (No. 4) is a handy container for all liquids which are being used in household processes, such as the water used in pottery making, the cane juice used in mixing cassiri, etc. Nos. 5 and 6 are variants of the tumai'ene type; the small tansepake tumai'eneme (No. 5) is frequently used as a container for crushed peppers. The tukuwari (No. 7) is the large jug in which cassiri and other drinks are set to ferment when they are made in small quantities or when the family does not have the use of a wooden cassiri barrel. The tuliwa (No. 8) is used for boiling any large mess; practically speaking, its most usual use is for boiling the mash of the various kinds of alcoholic drinks preparatory to setting them for fermentation. The uses of these several kinds of pots are further illustrated in the other photographs of Carib house life.

Calabashes. The several types of calabash vessels are illustrated in Plate 19; *b*. Generally speaking, these vessels are used for two purposes, drinking and storage of liquids. The open, semi-spherical types are used as drinking mugs. The closed types, with small holes cut in the shoulders or necks, are used as containers for drinking water and other liquids. Calabashes having long necks are sometimes carried on the trail as water flasks, in which case a small hole is bored through the upper part of the neck, through which a cord is passed. The carrying of water on the trail is infrequent, however, because creeks are fairly numerous in the bush.

In preparing the calabash vessels, the fruit or gourd is picked when completely ripe, the shell cut to suit the purpose to which it is to be put, and the pap removed. The gourd is sometimes boiled whole to loosen the pap. It is then dried in the sun or about the house until it is tough and hard. Aporokune juice is sometimes applied to the exterior, but I observed no examples of painting or other decoration.

In covering the mouth of either a calabash or a pottery jug, old rags may be used, or one pot may be turned upside down over the mouth of another. These methods prevent the entrance of insects, a purpose which is also accomplished by placing a thick layer of fresh clean grass over the mouth of the vessel. To stop the mouth of a flask which is being carried on the trail, a tight bunch of grass is firmly wedged into the opening.

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a, Types of pots. From left to right: tumai'ene; tuku'arimi; pyotomene; kurupu; tumai'-ene; tumai'ene; tukuwari; tullwa.

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b, Vessels made of calabashes.

[End plate 19]

000 this work. With regard to hunting, all the game killed by a particular gun, regardless of the marksman, is considered to belong to the gun's owner. This obtains even if the owner is not along on the hunting trip. After keeping what he wants of the catch for himself, the owner of the gun distributes the rest among the hunting party.

The only instances in which women enter into immediate exchanges with other Caribs involve the selling of pots.[5] Prices vary from $3.00 to $4.00 a pot. The number of exchanges has been small, and the potter is always the seller. No pots have been sold among the residents of the satellite settlements. At the Air Strip, two women have engaged in this enterprise.

The first potter is Anna Abraham, a temporary resident at the Air Strip. She makes her pots in Piai Creek where she has located a reliable source of clay. Male members of her household carry the pots on their backs to the Air Strip. Her pots are particularly noted for cracking and leaking, making it necessary for the purchaser to melt balata over them as a repair. Even so, during the first year of her residence at the Air Strip, she sold nine pots, both tuluva and tukuvali varieties. Six pots were sold for the use of different women in the households of the Captain, the prominent Councillor, and Baird's father-in-law. The other three pots were sold to her sister and her sister's daughter. However, there was controversy regarding the exchange with her sister. The sister's household claimed they did not have the money to pay for the pot.

Charlotte is the second potter. She is the same person Gillin records as being the youngest wife of the headman of Sawari. Now

she is a dependent widow and lives with her two daughters and son-in-law in his father's clearing. Her pots are particularly noted for being lopsided, making them easy to identify. She was the first to attempt to locate a suitable clay source at the Air Strip. She makes only tuluvas and has sold four at the Air Strip. Three were sold for the use of the mother of the man in whose clearing she resides and one for his sister.

The only cases in which pots were presented as gifts between clearings involve exchanges between mother and adult daughter. These are actual mother and daughter pairs. Classificatory relatives are not included. These gifts were made in four cases during the period of observation and are an aspect of the sustained generalized reciprocity between mother and adult child in different clearings. Exchanges between mother and adult son usually involve food. However, these exchanges are not formalized in any way and they do not always occur between specific mother and child pairs.

In sum, the pattern of cooperation among adult individuals residing in the same settlement has been eroded by the introduction of wage work, other markets, and a money economy. The household composed of an adult man and his wife or wives and children remains the primary cooperative economic unit. However, the household has been extended in various instances to include the adult son or son-in-law and their families. The sustained flow of mutual assistance among a wider circle of kinsmen no longer exists as a common pattern.

There is one exception to this pattern which has relevance only in its situational context. As the miners re-established bush farms,

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NOTES

[1]Gillin does not report the exact relationship between Miller and John Cook's wife.

[273] [2]Cassiri is fermented from cassava. Gillin reports two recipes (1936:61). Currently, only one is commonly used. Cassava meal is baked into dark brown cakes. Water with grated red potato for color is placed in the kanu - a hollow cedar log with carved handles at each end. The women with teeth then crumble the cakes with their hands into a mash in the kanu. All the while they chew mouthfuls of this mash and return it to the kanu. The contents of the kanu are then allowed to set for about three days before the drink is ripe. Singing and dancing and general conviviality take place during a cassiri spree until the supply of cassiri is exhausted. Attendance is by invitation, but strangers are usually welcomed.

[3]This contrasts to the nature of the work itself such as rubber collecting among the Mundurucu and fur trading among the Algonkian which resulted in nuclear family organization (Murphy and Steward 1956). Rubber trees and fur-bearing animals tend to occur in defined territories best exploited by single, mobile nuclear families.

[4]During the field work conducted in 1970-71, there occurred considerable innovation and experimentation with house types at the Air Strip and in the satellite settlements. In some cases, a wall was added on one or more sides of the traditional house structure, which is posts supporting a thatched roof. These walls were made of slats, boards, logs, woven mats or a variety of these materials. Also, some houses were built on tall poles which allowed a living floor to be constructed as much as one story above ground.

[5]Carib crafts have diminished in variety and skill since trade goods have been available. This is markedly apparent with regard to pottery. There are few potters and few pots. Commercial cookware of aluminum or enamel is used at the Air Strip and the satellite settlements for cooking and storage purposes.

[323] The diversity of clay pots reported by Gillin (1936:48-49) has been reduced to three types. A combination of shape and size elements distinguish the tuma etna, tukuwali, and tuluwa. The tuma etna or sauce pot is any small, free standing pot. These are between six and ten inches in dimension and include a variety of shapes. The tukuwali and tuluwa are not free standing. Rather, their base is small and somewhat pointed making it necessary for these pots to be supported by being partially sunk in the ground. They may be rimmed or rimless. The tuluwa has a broad mouth and is used for boiling sweet cassiri. The tukuwali has a constricted mouth and is primarily for storage. Sizes vary considerably. The largest are about three feet by three feet and the smallest are about eight inches in all dimensions.

[114] [241] [6]In his examination of the diagnostic features of slash-and-burn